

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
HERITAGE DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Animal Abstract

Element Code: AFCKA01090

Data Sensitivity: No

CLASSIFICATION, NOMENCLATURE, DESCRIPTION, RANGE

NAME: *Ictalurus pricei*

COMMON NAME: Yaqui Catfish, Price's Catfish

SYNONYMS: *Villarius pricei*, *Ameiurus pricei*, *Amiurus pricei*, *Haustor pricei*, *Ictalurus pricei*

FAMILY: Ictaluridae

AUTHOR, PLACE OF PUBLICATION: Rutter, 1896

TYPE LOCALITY: San Bernardino Creek, just south of international border (in extreme southeastern AZ), Sonora, Mexico (Rutter 1896, Proceedings California Academy Science, 6: 245-67).

TYPE SPECIMEN:

TAXONOMIC UNIQUENESS: "Only known ictalurid native to the Pacific Slope of North America" (Minckley 1973).

DESCRIPTION: "Coloration dark gray to black dorsally, white to grayish beneath. Barbels jet-black except on chin, where they are gray to whitened. Body is usually profusely speckled" (Minckley 1973). A reddish coloration is prominent beneath the head, and on the fins and tail. Adult size up to 57.0 cm (22.4 in.).

AIDS TO IDENTIFICATION: Similar to the channel catfish but has shorter pectoral and dorsal spines. "Far darker over-all than either the channel or blue catfishes" (Minckley 1973).

ILLUSTRATIONS: Color photo (Rinne and Minckley 1991:31, fig. 62)

TOTAL RANGE: Rio Yaqui system in Sonora and Chihuahua. Formerly in extreme southeast Arizona. Re-introduced to the Rio Yaqui on the San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge November 1997.

RANGE WITHIN ARIZONA: Historically occurred in San Bernardino Creek as far up as San Bernardino Ranch, Arizona (has been taken just south of the border in Sonora). An introduced population existed in the Monkey Springs Reservoir system from 1899 until the 1950's. The stock presumably came from the Rio Sonora basin of Sonora, Mexico, where the species still lives (Miller and Lowe 1964; Minckley 1973). A small population (350 fish) re-

introduced into the Rio Yaqui on the Northern most portion of the San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge in November 1997.

SPECIES BIOLOGY AND POPULATION TRENDS

BIOLOGY:

REPRODUCTION: The Yaqui catfish spawns in late spring. Eggs are laid in a nest constructed on the bottom then guarded by the male. He incubates the eggs by fanning away the silt. This action supplies oxygenated water to the eggs. Hatchlings collect in small schools that are protected by the male (Hendrickson 1980, Miller 1977). Males were taken from the Rio Yaqui basin with swollen heads in breeding condition and females with ripe ova.

FOOD HABITS: A bottom feeder. Food consists of other fish, insects, larvae, crustaceans, plant matter, and detritus.

HABITAT: Ponds or streams, primarily in larger rivers but also in small streams where it prefers quiet, clear pools. Most common in larger rivers in areas of medium to slow currents over sand/rock bottom (Hendrickson et al. 1979). Streams flow intermittently in the dry season, and the catfish seeks refuge in permanent, often spring fed pools.

ELEVATION: From the delta to highlands approximately 2,100 m (6,890 ft.). Introduced sites on the San Bernardino NWR and Johnson Historical Museum, are elevations of 3,730 and 3,780 ft (1138 and 1,153 m) respectively (AGFD, unpublished data accessed 2001).

PLANT COMMUNITY:

POPULATION TRENDS: The Yaqui catfish survived in San Bernardino Creek until spring flows diminished because of groundwater pumping and the creek dried up. Remaining habitat there was severely trampled by drinking livestock, making it uninhabitable (Hendrickson 1980, Miller 1977). Introduced in 1899 into the Santa Cruz River System (in reservoir fed by Monkey Spring) where they persisted until the 1950's. Now extirpated from United States waters (Minckley 1973).

SPECIES PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT STATUS: LT with Critical Habitat (USDI, FWS 1984)

STATE STATUS: WC (AGFD, WSCA in prep)
[State Endangered AGFD, TNW 1988]

OTHER STATUS: No Forest Sensitive Status (USDA, FS Region 3 1999)
[Forest Service Sensitive, USDA, FS Region 3 1988]

Determined Subject to Special Protection in Mexico
(Secretaría De Medio Ambiente 2000)

[Listed Rare, Secretaría de Desarrollo Social 1994]
SC, American Fisheries Society

MANAGEMENT FACTORS: **Threats:** aquifer pumping; reduction in stream flows;
water diversion; drought; hybridization, competition and predation by nonnative fishes.

Management needs: protect San Bernardino aquifers, and Leslie Creek and Black Draw
watersheds to ensure adequate perennial flow; ameliorate effects of nonnative fishes;
reintroduce into suitable habitats within historical range; stabilize and protect populations in
Mexico.

PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN:

SUGGESTED PROJECTS: Continue reintroduction into ponds at San Bernardino Ranch once
non-native fish are removed and habitat is restored.

LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP: FWS - San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge;
Johnson Historical Museum.

SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

REFERENCES:

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MAJOR KNOWLEDGEABLE INDIVIDUALS

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Revised: 1994-06-15 (DBD)
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